

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 (ACT

NO. 55 OF 1956)

[As on the 12th August, 2026]

LIST OF AMENDING ACTS

1. The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 1960 (17 of 1960). 2. The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 1977 (48 of 1977). 3. The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 1986 (22 of 1986). 4. The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2008 (11 of 2009). 5. The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2026 (14 of 2026).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

Subs.	.	.	.	.	.	„	Substituted.
w.e.f.	.	.	.	.	.	„	with effect from.

THE SUPREME COURT (NUMBER OF JUDGES) ACT, 1956

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

SECTIONS

1. Short title.
2. Maximum number of Supreme Court Judges, other than Chief Justice.

THE SUPREME COURT (NUMBER OF JUDGES) ACT, 1956

ACT NO. 55 OF 1956

[16th September, 1956.]

An Act to provide for an increase in the number of Judges of the Supreme Court, excluding the Chief Justice.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventh Year of the Republic of India as follows:— **1.**

Short title.—This act may be called the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956.

2. Maximum number of Supreme Court Judges other than Chief Justice.—The maximum number of Judges of the Supreme Court, excluding the Chief Justice of India, shall be 1[thirty-seven].

1. Subs. by Act 14 of 2026, s. 2, for “thirty-three” (w.e.f. 16-5-2026).

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

“Under Article 124 of the Constitution the Supreme Court shall consist of a Chief Justice and, until Parliament by law prescribes a larger number, of not more than seven other Judges. The present strength of this Court is the maximum permissible under this article and an increase in the number of Judges is possible only by Parliamentary legislation. The Chief Justice of India has pointed out that in view of the larger number of constitutional appeals coming up for decision before the Court it is necessary to have a constitutional bench sitting practically all the time and a constitutional bench has to have five Judges in view of the requirement of Article 145 (3). Other benches of the Supreme Court should ordinarily consist of a minimum of three Judges, since they will generally be hearing appeals from various High Courts disposed of by two or more Judges. The increase in the volume of work of the Supreme Court requires that there should be two such benches, instead of one as at present, functioning throughout the year and for this purpose three more Judges require to be appointed. The present Bill seeks to meet this end.”

NEW DELHI;

The 27th July, 1956.

G. B. PANT